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11 May 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Special Meeting of the Professional Selection Panel on 8 May 1953

1. Present:

Security
Comptroller
ONE
Personnel
OCD
OSI
OO
Personnel
OCS
OCI
DD/A
Security
Medical
ORR

OCI
PM
Commo
OO
OCD
DD/P
Training
Training
DD/I
Personnel
ONE
FI
Logistics
DD/I

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2. Mr. [REDACTED] opened the meeting by stating the purpose and functions of the Professional Selection Panel. The three responsibilities defined in CIA Notice [REDACTED] (formulating criteria, determining suitability of marginal applicants and trial period employees and notifying the Assistant Director (Personnel) and other appropriate officials of the Panel's recommendation) were discussed. Mr. [REDACTED] identified each of the Panel's members and advisors and indicated how these individuals had been selected. He then introduced Mr. [REDACTED] and turned the meeting over to him.

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3. Mr. [REDACTED] stated that the Panel had been requested by the CIA Career Service Board to reconcile the comment of the five command units concerning the Oral Examination Staff Study originally presented by the Personnel Office, and that the Panel's recommendations to the Board were the subject of today's discussion. The objective of the Panel's recommendations was to establish a clear cut policy framework within which a selection process for professional personnel could be developed. He cautioned those present that the Panel was not prepared to discuss procedural problems which might result from adoption of the proposed policy. Mr. [REDACTED] pointed out that he had discussed the Panel's proposal with several operating people and that they seemed to be concerned because they believed that the Panel was proposing policies which would result in the creation of an "elite corps". He stated that the Panel's proposal was aimed at improving the process of selecting new members of the career staff and would not of itself create an "elite corps".

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4. Mr. [REDACTED] made a brief statement in which he defined what he believed to be the two objectives of the proposal.

a. To avoid creating an elite corps; and,

b. To avoid placing an undue burden on the selection process.

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Mr. [REDACTED] stressed the fact that suitability only refers to basic qualities, such as integrity and emotional adjustment. It is not within the province of the Panel to assess the technical competence of an individual. The meeting was then opened to questions from the floor.

5. For the purpose of this memorandum the Panel's conclusions, as given in paragraph 3 of the Report, will be taken in order with each followed by a summary of the discussion on that point.

a. "Appointments to the Career Staff shall be made on a trial-service basis".

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The use of the term "career staff" refers to CIA Regulation [REDACTED] which had not been published at the time of this meeting. There were several questions directed at defining this term. Several individuals appeared to be fearful that this category identified a group smaller than all staff agents and staff employees. At this point questions were asked about the intent to form an "elite corps". After the career staff had been defined the main problem became that of explaining how the proposal differed from the now existing policy and procedures.

b. "The trial-service period shall be two years".

The Chairman pointed out that the Veterans Preference Act of 1944 and other legal factors would prohibit the extension of the trial-service period from one to two years and that it might not be possible to adopt this recommendation. Several persons voiced their belief that a one year trial-service period was perfectly adequate for Agency purposes.

c. "In exceptional individual cases the initial trial-service period may be extended".

There was no discussion of this point.

d. "On completion of the trial-service period a final determination shall be made as to whether the individual is suitable for career employment".

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Several individuals appeared not to be able to see how this differed with the present procedure or how the Professional Selection Panel could be in a position to make such a determination for the Agency. It was pointed out that the supervisor of an individual is in the best position to make a determination on that individual's suitability for a career in the Agency.

"If found suitable his status as a permanent member of the career staff shall be confirmed".

There was little discussion of this as a statement of principle. The use of the terms "permanent member" and "career staff" was questioned again in reference to the establishment of an "elite corps".

"If found unsuitable his employment as a member of the career staff shall be terminated. Such termination shall not render the individual ineligible for employment by the Agency in another category".

The discussion here centered on how an individual could be employed by the Agency in another category. This proposal appeared, to many members of the group, to lead to the creation of "second class citizenship rights" for some employees. The group agreed that this was an undesirable situation. Various members of the Panel pointed out that there are, at present, individuals employed by the Agency as staff employees who have indicated that they do not intend to make a career with the Agency (professors on sabbatical leave, as an example) and that there should be some means of distinguishing these persons from the career employee. It was agreed that this statement needed to be clarified in order to avoid the implications of "second class citizenship" and "elite corps".

e. "Members of the career staff may occupy either non-professional or professional positions".

The definition of a professional position was discussed particularly as it referred to non-clerical positions of grades GS-5 and GS-6. There was general agreement that the term "non-clerical positions" referred primarily to trainee positions which lead into professional positions GS-7 or higher.

f. "The final determination of suitability for career employment (in d above) shall, for employees in professional positions, be made by a special selection process".

- 3 -

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The Chairman restricted discussion on this point since the special selection process can be determined only after the policy frame of reference has been established.

6. Conclusions

Although this meeting was called by the Professional Selection Panel for the purpose of discussing Panel recommendations the discussion was concerned, in the main, with the over-all Career Service Program in CIA. This direction appears to have been taken in consideration of the following factors:

a. The Panel's recommendations are basic to the Career Service Program as well as to the method of selecting new employees.

b. The various levels of understanding about the methods and objectives of the Career Service Program represented in the group.

7. Summary

The foregoing statements have pertained to the broad nature of the Panel's conclusions and recommendations. It is necessary now, to deal briefly with the lack of understanding of the Career Service Program.

a. The discussion revealed considerable resistance, on the part of some members of the group, to any actions by the CIA Career Service Board which would restrict the autonomy of the operating Offices. This resistance was most apparent in the discussion concerning the review of trial-service employees and the determination of suitability for career service. It was emphasized that under the existing system every new employee (except a veteran who has already served his trial-service period elsewhere under the Veterans Preference Act) is on probation until he has completed a one year trial period. The supervisor determines whether the individual shall stay on as a permanent employee and in making this determination the supervisor considers the same factors which are of interest to the Panel. The Personnel Evaluation Report that is prepared prior to the termination of the trial-service period represents an evaluation of the individual which the Office Career Service Boards can use to identify unsuitable employees in sufficient time to take action.

b. There were several comments directed at the system of communications used for disseminating information about the Career Service Program. It was noted that although individuals in the Field had heard of the Career Service Program they had little or no idea of how the Program affected them. On the other hand one Office

- 4 -

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complained about the large amount of written materials being circulated in Headquarters. One individual stated that there was so much paper that he didn't try to read it all. Several individuals objected to the variations in terminology that have been used in written materials prepared since CIA Notice [REDACTED]. It was suggested that these variations have caused some confusion as to what the Career Service Program actually means.

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c. Finally, many of the remarks indicated that there is a need for some tangible benefits which will convince the first line employees that the Career Service Program has meaning for them. It was argued that a CIA Career Service Program, to be effective, must contain advantages for the average employee which are not obtainable in other government employment. Some of the benefits discussed were:

(1) Insurance coverage for dependents and personal effects of employees.

(2) Tenure of employment for career employees.

(3) 24-hour duty concept of employment to permit complete medical coverage.

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